TOWARD AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE FROM INTERVIEW DATA

K.G. Ross
Institute of Simulation and Training
University of Central Florida

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

Submitted to Dr. Daniel P. McDonald, Director of Research
Spring 2008

DEOMI Internal Report CCC-08-1

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE **2008**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **00-00-2008 to 00-00-2008**
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Toward an Operational Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence from Interview Data**		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER
		5e. TASK NUMBER
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **University of Central Florida,Institute of Simulation and Training,4000 Central Florida Blvd,Orlando,FL,32816**		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**		
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
14. ABSTRACT		
15. SUBJECT TERMS		

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**41**	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Purpose 1
Project Overview 1
Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence 3
Method 5
Research Question 5
Procedure 5
Participants 7
Findings and Implications 7
Demographics 7
Cross-Cultural Competence Factors Revealed in Interviews 7
Cross-Cultural Competence and Mission Effectiveness 14
Implications for a Cross-Cultural Competence Model 14
References 15
Appendix A – Institutional Review Board Proposal A-1
Appendix B – Cross-Cultural Competence and Mission Effectiveness B-1

Introduction

Purpose

The task documented here is part of a project to support Cultural Readiness for the Department of Defense. The purpose of this project is to derive a preliminary operational definition of cross-cultural competence and test and validate related measures in the military population. We define measurement for this purpose as establishing an understanding of the level of expertise in the target population. *Cross-cultural competence* (CCC) is the expertise which enables an individual in the military to perform in any number of cultures to achieve organizational goals (in contrast to more specific regional knowledge and language skills).

The first part of this task, previously reported, was to operationalize[1] the definition of CCC by using constructs previously investigated in the literature. The second half of this task, documented here, further develops the operational definition using the findings of critical incident interviews conducted to examine the role of cultural competence within the context of mission success.

Project Overview

The report covers Task 2b of the project. The project includes five tasks:

1) Identify Measures Related to Culture
2) Establish Key Operational Definition
    a) Operational Definition of CCC from the Literature
    b) Operational Definition of CCC from Critical Incident Interviews
3) Review of the Literature
4) Collection of Baseline Measures
5) Preliminary Report of Results

To develop a measurement tool, researchers must first engage in a *conceptualization phase*. Task 1 of the project, in which we identified measures of cross-cultural competence in the literature and examined their psychometric properties, addressed the

[1] to define a concept or variable so that it can be measured or expressed quantitatively

first part of our conceptualization process. Task 2a continued the conceptualization phase by examining the nature of existing constructs in the literature to come up with a definition of *what exactly is to be measured*. Conceptualization involves not only theoretically-based hypotheses about the CCC construct, but also descriptions of performance success to tie the construct to important and relevant outcomes of mission effectiveness.

Thus, we are undertaking a two-tiered approach to an operational definition of CCC by defining it both in terms of psychological variables *and* in relation to the unique performance challenges required in the context of mission performance.[2] We expect that we will find some constructs that lend themselves to self-report measurement via questionnaire administration and others that are skill-based behaviors and must be measured in a performance context (or at least with "performance-inspired" questionnaire items such as those found in Situational Judgment Tests or SJTs; e.g., Ascalon, 2005) to ensure that CCC is related to mission effectiveness. Thus, the results of Task 2a and 2b will provide us with the direction needed to address Task 3, in which we will bring our findings together as a basis for developing the measurement instrument.

In Task 3, we will finalize which constructs we wish to measure and develop a preliminary model of CCC by integrating constructs from the literature and findings from our interviews. We will review any additional relevant literature needed to validate our conclusions and to identify our initial item pool. We will then format our prototype questionnaire for pilot administration in Task 4, describe our rationale for the resulting pilot questionnaire, and explain the research findings and practical issues related to performance-based measurement. Task 4 includes administration of the questionnaire. Several administrations are required to develop a final version. This project concludes with Task 5, our final report on this preliminary project. The report will include an integration of the findings from each task, including results from the administration of

[2] Only a preliminary set of interviews can be funded as part of this project. They will allow us to understand the nature of the challenges and competencies, but will not provide results that are extensive enough to fully develop a complete approach to performance-based assessment or a full model of performance-based competency.

the initial measures, as well as conclusions and recommendations for more comprehensive competency modeling of CCC and further measurement development.

Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence

In our work to date, we examined the literature for existing factors and measures related to CCC and derived a working definition (in Task 2b) before we began the interview process. Our working operational definition of CCC is as follows.

Cross-cultural competence is the development of knowledge and skill through experience and training that results in a complex schema of cultural differences, perspective-taking skills, and interpersonal skills, all of which an individual can flexibly (or adaptively) apply through the willingness to engage in new environments even in the face of considerable ambiguity, through self-monitoring and through self-regulation to support mission success in a dynamic context.

A discussion of the factors we examined is provided in our previous report regarding the operationalization of CCC based on existing theory and measurement in the literature. Brief definitions and explanations are provided here again for ease of reference.

1) Enthnocultural Empathy refers to both emotional empathy—feeling and the expression of feeling, as well as the cognitive ability to take on the perspective of another person. For the purposes of this analysis, examples of emotional empathy are placed under this category. The cognitive ability to understand the reasoning, goals, and actions of another person is placed under the Mental Model/Perspective-taking factor.

2) Experience means interacting with people in another culture (in this case for the purpose of learning to achieve goals in that culture). Your job or assignment dictates an upper limit to how much interaction experience you can get. Expertise cannot grow, even when people are motivated, without tasks where they interact with members of another culture. If a lot of interaction is required to do a good job, expertise can grow quickly.

3) Flexibility is the ability to switch easily from one strategy to another, adjusting behaviors as the situation demands. In this case, focusing on the desired outcome of

the mission, but not making people in another culture do things the way you would is considered flexibility as well. Trying different ways of reaching a goal is flexibility.

4) Interpersonal Skills and Communication – Interpersonal skills encompass a wide category of behaviors. Individuals who interact successfully across cultures are able to display respect and maintain a nonjudgmental stance in interaction (Ruben & Kealey, 1979, as reported by Abbe et al., 2007). Interpersonal skills can mean the ability to negotiate, persuade or establish rapport.

5) Mental Model/Perspective-taking – Perspective-taking, frame shifting, and code switching are all ways of describing the skill or ability one can develop given a robust mental model of differing cultures. Mental models are the precursor to good perspective-taking, and include knowledge, and experience manipulating that knowledge so as to predict and reflect on what works and does not work and how when dealing with members of another culture.

6) Metacognition/Self-monitoring - Metacognitive knowledge includes planning, monitoring, and revising one's behavior in order to reach a targeted goal (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983). Metacognitive knowledge is theorized to lead to self-control and self-regulation. In other words, it has been described as having knowledge of and control over one's cognitions (Flavell, 1979). Self-monitoring has to do with the stability or flexibility of one's persona across situations (Snyder, 1974). Thus, high self-monitors are able to readily change their behavior according to the specific environment in which they are placed or in response to a dynamic situation. According to Snyder (1974), three characteristics of an individual scoring high on self-monitoring include: (1) concern for behaving in an appropriate manner; (2) sensitivity to cues in the environment; and (3) changes in behavior according to what the environment demands. This factor should possibly be combined with self-regulation and flexibility in this model.

7) Willingness to Engage; Openness to Experience; Orientation to Action – We grouped these variables together under one concept that we are defining as the tendency to actively search and explore new situations and to regard them as a challenge, as well as to engage in interaction with members of another culture.

8) Low need for cognitive closure/Tolerance for ambiguity – A need for closure may cause an engagement to be prematurely ended due to an immediate need

for answers or solutions and reluctance to look for other ways of seeing things. As a personality construct, the need for cognitive closure is presently treated as a latent variable manifested through several different aspects, namely, desire for predictability, preference for order and structure, discomfort with ambiguity, decisiveness, and close-mindedness (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). A high tolerance for ambiguity may be the opposite of a need for closure, but this has not been demonstrated in the literature. Because these two factors are difficult to separate in discussions of performance, such as these interviews, we are combining them for the purpose of this analysis.

9) Relationship Building – We discussed interpersonal skills as important to CCC, but we believe relationship building is such a key interpersonal skill that it should be addressed separately and seen as a primary component skill of CCC. We left interpersonal skills in the analysis in case types other than relationship building were brought up in the interviews.

10) Self-efficacy – This variable is the belief in one's ability to be successful in particular endeavors. It may be related to trying many times to succeed; believing success is possible.

11) Self-regulation or emotional regulation – This variable refers to the ability to control oneself during performance.

Method

Research Question

Interviews were conducted for this task in order to derive initial validation of the CCC definition and its hypothesized component factors, as well to relate CCC to mission effectiveness.

Procedure

The approved Institutional Review Board proposal, which outlines the procedure, is attached at Appendix A. The following steps were completed in the procedure:

- Pre-screening criteria were constructed to support the selection of interview participants (see Attachment A at the Appendix).

- Each interview started with a project overview given by the researcher to the interview participant (see Attachment B at the Appendix). The participant was given the opportunity to ask questions about the project or his role.
- An informed consent form (see Attachment C at the Appendix) was presented to each participant and signatures obtained. Permission to record the interview was obtained from the participant before the procedure continued. All interviews were recorded. Recordings are for the use of the analysis team only and the confidentiality of the data, including recordings, was described in the consent form.
- Demographics were collected from each participant and recorded on a form (see Attachment C at the Appendix). The demographics forms were revised and corrected as needed during data analysis.
- The remainder of the semi-structured interview was then conducted (see Attachment E at Appendix A). Semi-structured interviews allow for variation in the line of questioning within a general framework to explore important information revealed during the interview. The interview consisted of some or all of the following:
    - A task diagram outlining the general nature of the job held by the participant during his last deployment.
    - Ranking of self and team members in terms of CCC.
    - Probes to understand the nature of CCC. Knowledge audit probes as originally designed for the interview protocol were not used. They proved unsuccessful in a related, concurrent project being carried out for the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI). Instead we substituted probes that we generated from the ranking task and asked such questions as "What makes this person more competent that this person whom you ranked lower?" These alternate probes had proved successful in our ARI interviews.
    - Critical incidents: When a critical incident could not be generated, which was most of the time, the probes were used to deepen and obtain a number of examples or mini-incidents to illustrate the nature of CCC in relationship to the mission being discussed.

Participants

The pre-screening criteria were provided to the course from which the participants were drawn by the Director of Equal Opportunity Training, DEOMI. The pre-screening procedure resulted in ten potential participants. Five were selected for interviews. In addition to the five participants interviewed from DEOMI, data from four other interviews were added to our data set to increase our insights during analysis. The additional interviews were obtained under an approved IRB from ARI as part of a project to develop a CCC developmental model. An interview protocol similar to the one used here was used in that project.

Findings and Implications

Demographics

The five interview participants from the DEOMI class consisted of NCOs with recent Iraq deployment experience. The data from the DEOMI interviews was not sufficiently rich in a variety of mission types, depth of experience, or military branches examined. For that reason, data from four other interviews were added to our data set to increase our insights during analysis for a total of nine interviews (all male; Army). Table 1 below summarizes the background of the participants. The DEOMI participants are listed first.

Cross-Cultural Competence Factors Revealed in Interviews

Participants were asked to perform the "task" of placing their team members (without relaying identifying information) on a continuum and indicating the relative cultural competence of each team member where it was possible to identify a specific team or key people with whom the respondent typically worked. Figure 1 provides an example of that ranking and descriptors from a compilation of the interviews. Interview participants were then asked to discriminate those different people on the continuum in terms of what specifically about the person caused them to be ranked at that level. We also asked how people on the continuum differed. This questioning provided descriptions which allowed us to assess descriptions of competence from the field in terms of the factors previously identified in the literature.

Table 1

Overview of Demographic Information for the Interview Participants (n = 9)

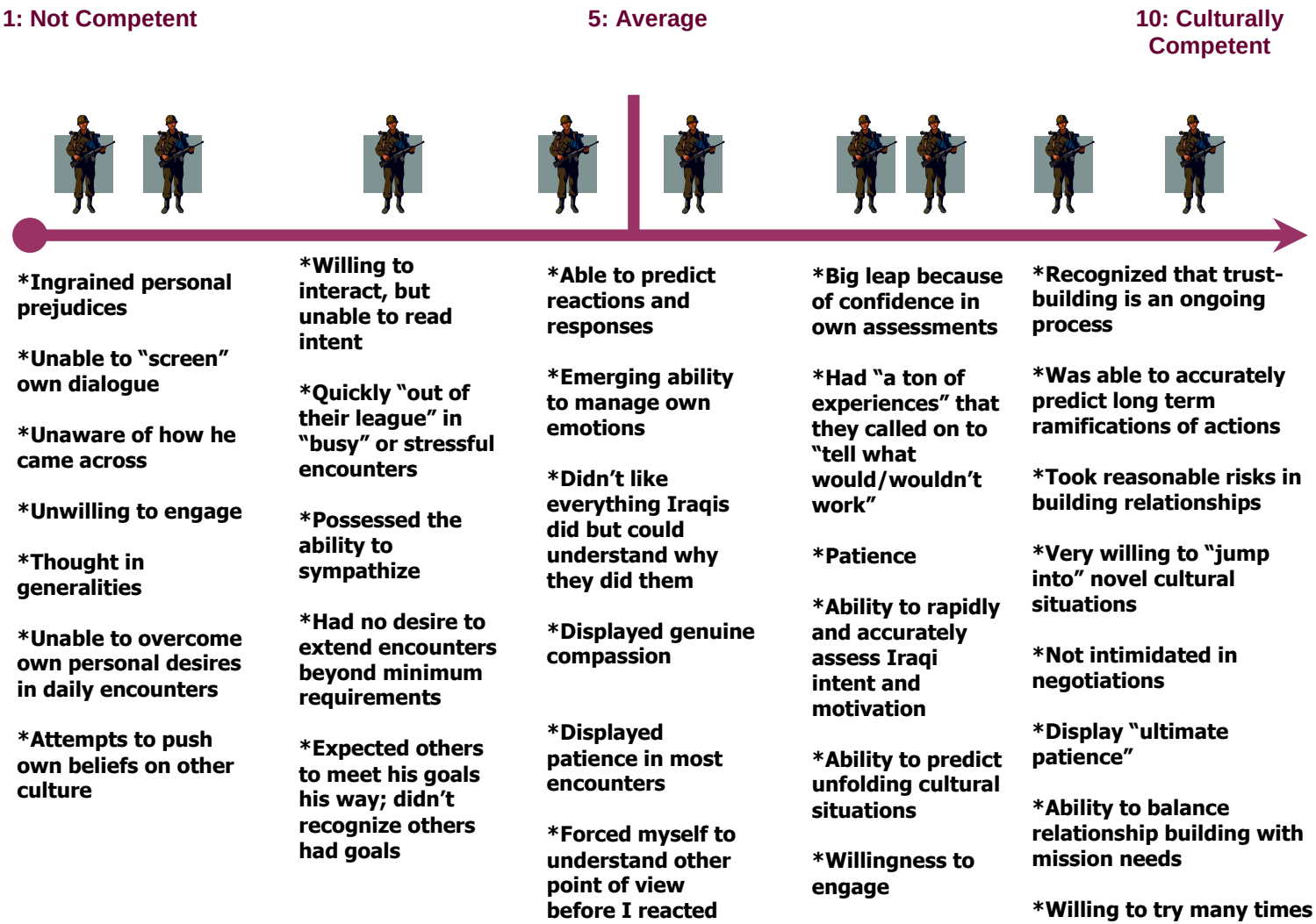
MOS or Branch, Current Rank, Age,	**Deployments**	**Position During Last Deployment**	**Cultural Training Received Prior to Most Recent Deployment**
1 Army 25U Communications MSG 42	• Iraq (though December 07) • Iraq (2005) • Somalia • Egypt • Pakistan • Afghanistan • Haiti	Brigade First Sergeant, Infantry	Training in Kuwait: Basic words, mannerisms, basic customs, overcoming stereotypes and misconceptions taught in previous training; using first impressions to identify enemy versus non-enemy; using other civilians to identify enemy; the way a village actually operates. Ongoing training in country.
2 Army 25W Signal SFC 37	• Iraq (through January 08) • Iraq (2005) • Iraq (2003) • Iraq – Desert Storm • Germany • Korea	Platoon Sergeant, Signal Platoon	Customs, history, religion
3 Army 25W Signal SFC 38	• Iraq (through Oct 2006) • Iraq (2004) • Thailand • Kosovo • Germany (twice) • Korea	Platoon Sergeant, Signal Platoon	Minimal training: Three hours of culture and language and received CDs and a handbook. They were told to study the handbook, but did not have enough to go around. Immediately before deployment and people were thinking of other things and many left the material behind.

MOS or Branch, Current Rank, Age,	**Deployments**	**Position During Last Deployment**	**Cultural Training Received Prior to Most Recent Deployment**
4 Army 25W Signal SFC 48	• Iraq (through Jan 08) • Iraq (2006) • Iraq (2004) • Korean • Desert Shield • Turkey • Germany	Communications Chief for MiTT unit (Note: MiTT is U.S. Army Military Transition Team which trains Iraqi Forces.)	Forty hours of Arabic, then cultural training through the MiTT training including Islamic background information. (Note: MiTT training is conducted at Fort Riley, Kansas and is scheduled for 60 days. Includes interaction with Iraqi role players.)
5 Army 88M Transportation SFC 37	• Iraq (through Sep 06) • Afghanistan (2005) • Iraq 2004 • Bosnia • Iraq Desert Storm • Egypt	Platoon Sergeant, Transportation Unit	Area briefing
6 Army Civil Affairs SSGT Age Unknown	• Afghanistan (through Feb 2007) • Germany	Civil Affairs Team Leader as part of a Provincial Reconstruction Team	• Warrior Training, Fort Bragg (training for area of deployment and specific mission training) • Fort Bragg Special Forces Language School

MOS or Branch, Current Rank, Age,	**Deployments**	**Position During Last Deployment**	**Cultural Training Received Prior to Most Recent Deployment**
7 Army Infantry Captain 26	• Iraq (through Jan 08)	Team Operations Officer/Maneuver Trainer	MiTT Training at Fort Riley, Kansas (He noted that no one was pleased with the training. It was poorly structured and no one wanted any feedback from the students.)
8 Army Branch Unknown LTC (retired) Contractor 52	• Currently in Afghanistan through Dec 08 • Iraq • Bahrain (US Embassy Foreign Sales)	Currently at Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) as Lead Instructor for Staff Operations for the Afghanistan Army	None. Hired "over the internet sight unseen" based on years of Middle East experience.
9 Army Field Artillery Captain 33	• Iraq (through Mar 08) • Iraq • Germany	Member of a MiTT	MiTT Training at Fort Riley, Kansas

Figure 1

Example Participant Rankings of Team Members with Example Compilation of Cross-Cultural Competence Descriptors [a]



[a] Data obtained primarily from U.S. Army Research Institute ongoing research being conducted by 361 Interactive, LLC and Cognitive Performance Group, LLC and used by permission. Examples are also reflected under "Interview 9" in Table 2.

The group of participants we interviewed contained a few people with sufficient experience to be called highly competent. Many were not very culturally competent by their own admission and inexperienced in terms of actual interactions. Yet all had important observations as to what they thought competence included. Therefore, the findings are not directly an analysis of expertise, but an analysis of observations from a range of people as to what makes up competence or causes competence to develop.

Table 2 summarizes these findings in terms of the total number of examples or issues brought up in each interview that included one of the factors listed above and the total number of examples of each factor over the set of interviews. Interview nine includes findings from that interview plus data from Figure 1 above. While these findings are not based on extensive coding and inter-rater reliability, they do give us an initial idea of whether the factors we extracted from the literature are instrumental in performing current military missions and, therefore, whether we should pursue their measurement.

We found that mental models/perspective-taking is the critical element of competence. We defined this as a cognitive skill and separated emotional empathy into another factor. Can a person develop an understanding of the culture in a manner that allows them to take the perspective of a member of that culture and use it to predict behavior and attitudes? Simply being able to understand, cognitively, the perspective of another person or group of people is not sufficient for competence. Interpersonal skills are the second most important factor to achieving a mission in another culture. Interpersonal skills include the ability to persuade and negotiate, as well as how to size up a group or person, and how to present oneself. Interpersonal skills also include the rapport building necessary to move about safely in a threatening country or do short-term tasks that do not require ongoing relationships. A willingness to engage and openness to experience and challenge are also key factors. While empathy was also found to be very important, it was more often mentioned in terms of the need to correct the behavior of Soldiers who had little respect or insight into the lives of those people whose country they found themselves in. At higher levels of competence, relationship-building was the key ability as opposed to simply empathetic understanding. All factors emerged in the interviews except the need for closure/tolerance for ambiguity. This finding may be related to the abstract

Table 2

Cross-Cultural Competence Factors Found in the Interview Data

Factor	Total	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9
1. Empathy [a]	31	7	4	3	1	6	0	1	4	5
2. Experience	19	5	3	3	1	2	1	0	2	2
3. Flexibility	17	3	0	0	2	0	1	7	2	2
4. Interpersonal Skills [b]	45	7	2	0	0	0	16	13	3	4
5. Mental Models [c]	100	8	9	6	8	15	10	15	18	11
6. Metacognition/ Self-Monitoring	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
7. Willingness to Engage/Openness to Experience	34	3	3	2	4	7	3	2	3	7
8. Low Need for Closure/Tolerance for Ambiguity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Relationship Building Ability [d]	23	2	0	1	0	2	3	4	8	3
10. Self-Efficacy [e]	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
11. Self-regulation [f]	19	3	0	0	0	0	1	7	2	6
Key Words and Phrases in Language	13	2	1	2	2	4	0	1	0	1

[a] such as overcoming stereotypes

[b] understanding who is in charge in a group; sizing people up; communicating as equals; creating cooperative actions; persuasion (getting others to understand our actions and what's in it for them); negotiation; posture and body language; attitude

[c] knowledge and cognitive ability to support perspective-taking; includes getting the facts to understand people's roles in a situation; includes gaining the cultural knowledge and using it to perform perspective-taking

[d] includes building trust

[e] trying many times because you believe you can make something work

[f] In practice the factors of patience, self-regulation, flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, and self-monitoring seem overlapping

nature of this factor. It seemed from our insight into the interviews that the successful attitude in cross-cultural missions combines tolerance for ambiguity with patience, self-regulation, flexibility, and self-monitoring.

Cross-Cultural Competence and Mission Effectiveness

When possible, we gathered critical incidents based on examples mentioned during the ranking task described above to further amplify the nature of cultural competence. Generally, it was difficult to elicit incidents, and we relied heavily on examples that were not fully developed incidents. We had informally hypothesized that the proficiency level of cultural competence needed would vary for the nature of the mission, but the examples we gathered led us to conclude that missions can easily enter new phases, and circumstances can put people in situations where interaction is required. A leader cannot predict which members of his unit will need to be culturally competent. Some will obviously need culture competence for their job; the need for cultural competence will emerge for many others. At times that emergent requirement will be in a crisis situation. Examples which illustrate the connection between cultural competence and mission effectiveness are provided at Appendix B.

Cross-culture competence is an integral part of counterinsurgency operations (COIN) from MiTT operations to capturing insurgents to stabilizing a region's economy and security. Such experiences make up our interview data, because our nation is heavily involved in COIN operations now. However, COIN really consists of full-spectrum warfare and as such provides us insight into how CCC is essential for all phases of operations and their supporting efforts such as Signal and Transportation. Our examples at Appendix B illustrate this insight.

Implications for a Cross-Cultural Competence Model

Our next task includes the generation of a preliminary model and final selection of factors for examination. Analysis of the interviews supports inclusion of all the factors in our preliminary model and prototype measurement instrument, although we may combine some of the factors.

The factor of self-regulation seems to grow from developing a good mental model of how another culture operates. This enables one to predict how members of another culture may act and react and, thus, lessens frustration when expectations are not met. Self-efficacy is not really useful without a good mental model to support cognitive perspective taking. Without this factor, frustration sets in and belief in one's ability to make an impact fades.

Emotional empathy seems to be more important at lower levels of competence as an entry-level attitude and ability in order to move to higher levels of competence. This effect is shown when placing different descriptors by the ranking of team mates in Figure 1. Cognitive empathy, understanding how others think and perceive the world and predicting their behavior, develops at advanced levels. Emotional perspectives are rarely mentioned in describing the person with the highest levels of competence, and are mentioned often at lower levels.

Opportunity for experience interacting with people from another culture sets the upper limit for how far a person's expertise can develop. A person's willingness to engage and be open to new experiences can limit one's ability to take advantage of the opportunity, but without assignments where a person interacts on a regular basis, expertise cannot go beyond basic competence.

Another aspect to cultural competence that these interviews uncovered is that our focus should not be just on the competence of the individual. In the case of leaders, an extremely importance aspect of competence is how the leader recognizes the competence level of those he is supervising and reacts to that with training or on-the-spot correction. Being able to use one's own competence to influence the level of competence in your organization is a leadership skill.

References

Abbe, A., Gulick, L. M. V, & Herman, J. L. (2007). *Cross-cultural competence in Army leaders: A conceptual and empirical foundation.* U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Study Report 2008-1. Arlington, VA: ARI.

Ascalon, M. E. (2005). Improving expatriate selection: Development of a situational judgment test to measure cross-cultural social intelligence. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tulsa, 2005). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 65*, 9-B.

Brown, A. L., Bransford, J. D., Ferrara, R. A., & Campione, J. C. (1983). Learning, remembering, and understanding. In J. H. Flavell & E. M. Markman (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (4th Ed., Vol. 3, pp. 77-166). New York: Wiley.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34,* 906-911.

Snyder, M. (1974). Self-monitoring of expressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 30,* 526-537.

Webster, D. M., & Kruglanski, A. W. (1994). Individual differences in need for cognitive closure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*, 1049-1062.

Appendix A – Institutional Review Board Proposal

HUMAN PROTECTION/RESEARCH PROTOCOL
Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute

1. Project Title: Defining Cross-Cultural Competence in the Military

2. Principal Investigator: Karol G. Ross, Ph.D., Chief Scientist, Cognitive Performance Group, Orlando FL

3. Current training authorization: Completed "Basic Course" under the "Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)" institution at https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp. Date 3-4-08; ref # 1602609.

4. Purpose: The purpose of the project is to understand the nature of cross-cultural competence in the military. We are interested in the different skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are involved in cross-cultural competence. This understanding will be used to help us develop a model of competence and to develop assessments of this competence across the military. In addition to literature review, we want to interview individuals who have had to develop and use an understanding of another culture in order to conduct military missions. We want to interview people who have had first-hand experiences in working with people from another culture.

5. Subject Population, Recruitment Procedures, Facilities, Equipment, and Location (If using identifiable data, describe data fields, and source) Interview participants will be recruited from the DEOMI organization and will consist of trainers or students in a current DEOMI course. The course coordinator, LTC Tim Thomas, requested that we provide an instrument of some type to help him pre-screen potential interview participants. (See Attachment A.) LTC Thomas has reviewed the instrument and concurs with its use.

6. Research Procedure: (chronology of events/activities, safeguards, descriptions of methods for collecting/analyzing/interpreting, and storing data). The procedure will consist of participants in the course or trainers on the staff volunteering to be interviewed in response to the prescreening instrument. Each participant will be interviewed in a place and at a time that is private and located somewhere within the DEOMI building. Each participant will be asked to sign a consent form, will be interviewed to fill out a demographics form, and then will be engaged in the interview in accordance with our interview protocol. Our critical incident interviewing will be completed using a semi-structured interview protocol. Audio recordings of the interviews will be made with the permission of the participant. All information identifying the participant or people the participant discusses will be removed. An identifier will be substituted instead for the names of the participants or anyone they discuss during the interview when the data is organized for analysis and for storage. Participants will be asked not to use ranks and names that could make it easy to identify any person discussed, but this is not always successful, so data will be examined for the need for identifiers as it is prepared for analysis.

7. Potential Risks and Discomforts to Participants: (list all perceived negative impacts for each risk, identify steps taken to alleviate the risk)
The only potential discomfort we perceive is that potential participants who have post-traumatic stress as a result of their military deployment will be uncomfortable recalling their experiences. We will specifically try to avoid recruiting any participants with identified PTSD. Our prescreen instrument for example, specifically asks participants if they are willing to openly discuss their thoughts and feelings about specific experiences. We will remind them at the beginning of the interview that their participation is voluntary and they can decline to discuss anything they don't want to discuss or to end the interview at any time. No other risks are perceived.

8. Anticipated Benefits to Participants: (list all possible gains)
At a minimum, "The participants will gain individual satisfaction that they will be aiding in improving EO education and training programs."
The participants will gain satisfaction knowing they have provided information that may save lives and will support increased mission success. Our experience with critical incident interviewing is that participants generally want to share their experiences for that reason. And, we have often found that the detailed interview protocol we use allows participants to emerge from the interview experience with much more insight into their own performance than they had before the interview.

9. Privacy and Confidentiality: (list steps to be taken to protect participants' privacy and to protect the confidentiality of data gathered, e.g. avoid revealing subject's identity, e.g. SSN, student's class identifier, rank, gender, etc.)
We will gather rank, gender, years of service and deployments as well as any particular training the individual had for cultural competence. We will not gather SSNs or class identifiers. We will remove the name from our records and substitute another identifier once we have completed the interview. Names will be used only while we are in the process of coordinating participation and to address the participant during the interview. All data will be used only within the research team. No data analysis will use names, and no names will be reported in any way in the findings.

10. Informed Consent: The consent process will ensure that:

(1) Participation and Withdrawal: "Participation in this study is voluntary. If participants choose not to participate, this action will not affect their relationship with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute and there will be no loss of benefit to which the participants would otherwise be entitled. If participants participate, they are free to withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. (When completing any on-line surveys, the participants will be asked if they consent to the study and if they agree will "click" to continue)".

(2) Rights of Research Participants: "Participants may withdraw their consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. They are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of participation in this research study".

11. Attachments: (Attach any questionnaires, surveys, interview questions, observation

tools, performance measures, etc. that will be used during data collection.)

Attachment A: Prescreening/Recruitment Instrument:
Attachment B: Project Briefing
Attachment C: Demographics Form
Attachment D: Informed Consent Form
Attachment E: Interview protocol

12. Signatures:

Principle Investigator _____ Date: _____

Director of Research, DEOMI _____ Date: _____

PRESCREEN SURVEY FOR CROSS-CULTURE COMPETENCE INTERVIEWS

Purpose of the project: The purpose of the project is to understand the nature of cross-cultural competence in the military. We are interested in the different skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are involved in cross-cultural competence. This understanding will be used to help us develop assessments of this competence across the military. One part of our effort is to interview individuals who have had to develop and use an understanding of another culture in order to conduct military missions. We want to interview people who have had first-hand experiences in working with people from another culture.

Objective: To select people to participate in individual interviews of 2 hours in duration.

We would like you to consider participating in an interview if you can answer yes to the following questions:

- You have at least one deployment where you had to interact directly with members of another culture (other than coalition forces) on a regular basis to achieve your mission. Iraq and Afghanistan are not the only deployments that are acceptable. There are currently other missions being conducted by the US military in numerous countries. If your deployment required you to interact regularly in a culture outside the US that is significantly different from US culture to achieve a military mission, this is acceptable.
- You have returned from that deployment within the last two years.
- You believe you have gained some level of competence in understanding how to achieve military goals that depend on interacting with members of another culture.
- You have *first-hand experience* in making assessments and decisions about people from other cultures and in interacting with them as part of achieving your mission.
- You are comfortable talking in detail (in an unclassified mode) about your thoughts and attitudes as we ask you to tell us about specific work experiences you have had.

If you meet these criteria and would consent to an interview, please provide the following to help us select a group of interview participants. Your name is for contact information only and will not be used or retained in the data records of this project or used in reports.

Name:
Service (e.g., Army, Navy, Civilian):
MOS or equivalent designation:
Years in service:
Current rank:
Most recent deployment
    Country:
    Dates Deployed:
    Role or job while deployed:

POC for questions about this research project:

Dr. Karol Ross
407-737-8998

LTC Donald Farnsworth
Program Manager Cultural Readiness, DEOMI
321-494-9922

Project Briefing: Cultural Competency Study

The overall objective of this research project is to understand the nature of cross-cultural competence in military operations—what skills support mission success—and how to assess the skill level of members of the military. To support this project, selected participants with cross-cultural experience are being interviewed. The goal of these interviews is to develop an understanding of how cross-cultural competence develops and is evaluated via real-world examples. You have been identified as someone with relevant cross-cultural experience within a military deployment. We will use the information you provide to support the development of a model of cross-cultural competence and assessment metrics.

All of the information you provide will be used for research purposes only. It will not become part of your or your peers' military records, nor will anything you discuss be revealed to your peers, subordinates, or superiors. It is very important to the goals of the project that you do your best to provide complete and accurate information, but please be aware that this project is at the unclassified level, and sensitive or classified information should not be discussed.

*For additional information, you can contact LTC Don Farnsworth (*donald.farnsworth@patrick.af.mil*) at the DoD Culture Center of Excellence or Dr. Karol Ross at the Cognitive Performance Group (karol@cognitiveperformancegroup.com).*

Demographic Data

1. **Basic Demographics**

Identifier: _____ Age: _____ Rank: _____ Gender: M F

2. **Deployment History (Most recent first):**

Location	Dates	Duration	Rank at Time	Position	MOS	Urban/Rural

3. **Non-Military Extended (> 1 month) Experiences in another Country/Location outside the U.S.**

Location	Dates	Duration	Position & Purpose (Job, school, etc.)

4. **Experience serving on a Coalition Staff or other Military Multicultural Team**

Dates	Duration	Position	Staff or Team Makeup

5. History of Cultural Training

Type of Training (Regional skills, Language skills, etc.)	Dates	Duration	Location

Informed Consent and Privacy Act Statement

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), this notice informs you of the purpose of this research and how the findings will be used.

You are being asked to participate in an interview to support the official research mission of DEOMI. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, this action will not affect your relationship with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute and there will be no loss of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled. If you participate, you are free to withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

Anonymity:

All individual information gathered during this study will be kept strictly confidential. Further, the information provided throughout participation in this study will be stored in such a way that the data cannot be connected to people's names, thus ensuring privacy. Researchers will combine interview data collected from you with data collected from other interviews to gain an understanding of how cross-cultural competence develops and how it can be assessed. The eventual products of this effort may support more effective training and assessment of service members in cross-cultural settings. Although partial identifiers will be requested, such as rank and deployment history, neither your name nor your SSN will be collected and maintained in the data file. Further, full confidentiality of all individuals will be maintained in data handling and reporting. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed for research purposes. You may choose to not have the interview audio recorded or to stop the recording at any time. When speaking of fellow military members, please do not use any identifiers, as they are irrelevant to the interview's purpose.

What is being asked:

Your participation will consist of providing demographic information and answering interview questions about your experiences during deployment in another country. The interview will take approximately 2 hours to complete. Your response will be recorded via a digital audio recording device if you consent. The purpose of the recording is to insure we do not miss any of the information that you give us. We will use the audio recordings only to verify what we have written on the demographics form or in out interview notes. Your personal identifying information will not be maintained with the recording, and the recording will not be available to anyone outside the research team.

Other concerns:

The researchers agree to answer any questions that you may have at this time or at any time during the duration of the study. You do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. *If at anytime during the study you feel uncomfortable in any way, you can and should inform the researcher and the study will be terminated immediately with no penalty or loss of benefit.* If we feel that participation is emotionally stressful for you, we will ask you if you wish to stop the interview. There will be no compensation for your participation.

Information regarding your rights as a research volunteer may be obtained from either contact listed below:

IRB Coordinator
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Mr. Jerry Scarpate
Telephone: (321) 494-2676

Caroline Miner, CIP
(703) 575-2677
HRPP@tma.osd.mil

Questions about anything having to do with this study can be addressed to:

Karol Ross, Ph.D.
Cognitive Performance Group
14151 Weymouth Run
Orlando, FL 32828
Phone: (407)-737-8998
E-mail: karol@cognitiveperformancegroup.com

I have read the procedure described above. I understand all points and agree to participate in the interview process and I have received a copy of this description. I further state and certify that I am at least 18 years of age.

_____	_____
Signature of Participant	**Signature of Researcher**
_____	_____
Date	**Date**

DEOMI Cultural Competence (CC) Interview Protocol_

Interview Structure:

This protocol serves as a guide to interviewers and an overview for IRB review or for observers from the sponsoring agency. Participants will be interviewed by interviewers from the Cognitive Performance Group. One interviewer will serve as lead, directing the course of the interview, while a second interviewer will ensure adequate documentation and provide backup questioning support. Notes will be in handwritten form with audio recordings made as well (if participants consent). Interviews will last approximately 2 hours, with a 5 minute break taken after the first hour as needed. Any observers will be asked to not ask questions until the end of the interview when an opportunity will be available.

The interviews will follow a semi-structured format to facilitate the exploration of novel ideas or specific points of interest. Task Diagram (TD) development and Critical Decision Method (CDM) verbal probes will be used throughout to guide the interviews. A team member ranking/differentiation task may be used with any team leaders who participate. *Note that not all methodologies will be used with all participants.* Based on the perceived success of the different methodologies as the interviews progress, certain methodologies may be utilized more or less often. Interview participants who cannot successfully produce an incident for discussion may be asked Knowledge Audit probes instead of pursuing the CDM critical incident method.

I. Introductions/Research Goals/Demographics

At the beginning of each interview, the interviewers will introduce themselves and briefly describe the project background, goals and sponsorship. The interviewers will distribute the privacy act/informed consent statement and project description. Also during this introduction, the following critical elements of information will be conveyed to participants:

1. Participants will be informed about the expected duration and general nature of the interview.
2. Participants will be told that participation is entirely voluntary, and that they can refuse to be interviewed, decline to answer specific questions, or stop the interview at any time at their discretion with no negative repercussions.
3. Participants will be told that the project and in particular, the interviews, are at an unclassified level, and that the interviewers will remind them of this throughout, but will ultimately rely on the participant to not reveal sensitive or classified information. Interviewers will ask participants to err on the side of safety when they are uncertain as to the sensitivity or classification of information.
4. Participants will be explicitly asked to not reveal names or any other identifying information about any other fellow military members during the course of the interviews. (If such names are revealed they will be removed and identifiers inserted during data preparation.)
5. Participants will be asked for permission to audio record the interview. Interviewers will explicitly state that the participant can decline this request with no negative repercussions whatsoever, and that they may have the recording

stopped at any time during the course of the interview. Interviewers will also state that the audio recordings, transcripts and raw interview notes will not be shared outside the interview team and the project sponsors.

6. Participants will then be asked if they have any questions prior to beginning the interview.
7. Interviewers should coach the participant is his or her role before the interview starts. Specifically, the interviewer will tell the participant that the role of controlling the flow of the interview belongs to the interviewer. The participant does not need to anticipate what the interviewer wants or control the interview. Rather the interviewer should simply concentrate on remembering experiences and describing them in response to the interviewers' questions.

II. Demographics and Standard Questions

Interviewers will ask participants for the information on the demographics form. The interviewer will attempt to fill out the form and will finalize it after the interview as needed by consulting the recording and notes.

III. Task Diagram

Participants will be asked questions to allow the researcher to develop a Task Diagram (TD). The purpose of a TD is to elicit the major components of a job from the participant. Specifically, we are interested in how the participant characterizes the job as it was actually done, not in how the doctrine or other guidance prescribes the job is to be done. The purpose of the TD is to understand what parts of a job are most cognitively demanding, or in this case, which parts of the job required the participant to make the most assessments and decisions based on culturally-based knowledge and experience.

With a large piece of paper or a white board in front of them, the participant will be asked something akin to the following: "Can you tell me what the 3-6 major aspects of your job were? I will draw 3-6 circles and each one will represent a major component of your job. We will label each component, and then we will generate a few bullets in each circle to describe that aspect of the job. If the major components are dependent on each other or occur in chronological order, we will indicate that with arrows." After this portion of the TD is finished, we ask the participant to tell us which of the major components was the most challenging (and second most challenging) in terms of decisions and assessments that depended on understanding the culture or perspective of others they had to interact with. This exercise helps us understand which areas are most challenging and potentially fruitful to probe for incidents and sometimes identifies tasks that are not already recognized in existing doctrine.

III. Critical Decision Method Interview

The CDM portion of the interviews will be organized around a verbal recall of a specific incident. These incidents will be, by necessity, first hand experiences, and cannot be generalized (e.g., "usually, when this happens, the next thing that you'll see is…."), because such generalized accounts lack environmental context.

The following is the envisioned progression of the CDM interviews, based on standard CDM protocols, but tailored to the needs of this project:

Part 1: Incident Identification
Here, interviewers will be looking for incidents in which the participants played a key role in managing or planning for a complex cross-cultural interaction and/or directly interacting to complete a mission. The goal is to see assessment and decisions through the eyes of the person being interviewed. It is critical that the incident be one where the participants was "on the hot seat" to make a mission or situation work. As noted above, the Task Diagram may provide areas to probe for incidents. Probes will be along the lines of: "Can you think of a time when your experience and expertise was really important in helping you make an accurate assessment of someone from another culture and that assessment was critical to your mission?" "Can you think of a time when you were in the midst of X (Where X is one of the job tasks identified by the participants earlier in the interview that has a strong cultural component -- e.g., extended interaction with your foreign counterparts) and your skill really made a difference—maybe things would have gone much worse if you hadn't been there?" Participants will be reminded again that we want to know about something they did where their actions, assessments and decisions directly affected the outcome of he mission or situation. The incident recount should only take five minutes or less at the first identification. Give participants up to two minutes to think of an incident.

Part 2: Story Telling
Participants will then be asked to give a run through of the incident, without interruption by the interviewers. Interviewers will be listening for places to probe, story gaps or timeline, errors made, situation assessment shifts, violated expectancies and other cues for deepening at the next level. A few examples of indicators that such cues were present are: "Something just didn't feel right," "It all seemed familiar," "It depends on the situation." The researcher is cautioned to look for the word "I" or "we." Occasionally military members are not able to separate out their role in situation from the role of their unit or team. It is important that we get a first person account. No more than 10-15 minutes should be allocated to provide an overview of the situation; we only want enough information to decide if we should go further with this incident. We avoid asking questions that will bring out too much detail during the first recounting of the incident. Sometimes more than one incident is identified before a suitable one is found for further interviewing.

Part 3: Verifying the Details
After the uninterrupted telling of the story, the interviewers will ask participants a wide range of clarification questions. The objective here will be to obtain a clear understanding of the incident as it occurred, clarify any inconsistencies, identify the key decision points, and tie a timeline into the story. A timeline will be constructed to verify understanding of the incident. Ideally, a large piece of paper or a white board will be available to draw the timeline where all can see it.

Part 4: Deepening on the Incident

The next series of questions will probe more deeply into the participants' decision process. Specific probes will focus on cues and information sources employed, decisions made, objectives, situation assessments made, and strategies employed *within the incident*.

Part 5: Hypothetical Probing
The last part of the CDM interview will probe for expert-novice differences and common errors that can be made. This information is especially relevant to this effort as it will help guide the identification and definition of the cultural competence developmental model. This will be done with a series of what-if type probes. Examples of probes that will likely be used include: Were other courses of action considered? Why/Why not? Would someone else with less experience have acted differently? How? Would you have made the same decision when you first started the assignment? How about 5 years ago in your career? How would this situation turned out if you had not been there? What are the most likely errors that someone with less experience would make in that situation?

IV. Knowledge Audit Probes

Interviewers may then begin questioning with customized KA type probes as an alternative method if no suitable incidents are found or if the incidents are not "rich" in detail. The specific intent of the KA probes during these interviews is to identify multiple examples of cross-cultural skills and skill assessments. The KA probes will provide breadth while the CDM probes will then provide depth on particular incidents. This approach will ensure that the collected data will not be too limited in detail or sense of dynamics (the major weakness of KA probes alone), and at the same time not too limited in scope (which can happen with CDM interviews alone). Therefore, a data set that has both types of methods used can be more robust. However, using both methods in one interview is usually not possible in the given time.

Examples of a few of the types of probes that may be used at this stage in the interview include the following:

<u>Perceptual Cues</u>
We suspect that expert or highly proficient [Soldiers/Marines/Airmen] can see things in situations that novices cannot during cross-cultural encounters. Sometimes experts in general can see things that novices cannot. In your experiences, has this ever been the case? Can you provide some examples?

<u>Mental Models</u>
Typically, experts have a sense of the big picture that novices don't have. Can you tell us about a time in the past year when a less-experienced team member clearly didn't have the big picture during a cross-cultural interaction?* What does that tend to look like? How can you tell how well developed a team member's big picture is?

* At these points in the probes, the interviewers will remind participants that no names or any other identifying information should be used. They will also be reminded that they can decline to answer any questions and/or turn off the audio recording at any time.

Analogues
If you were going to construct a scenario to teach someone that conducting a mission that requires cultural competence is a tough job, what would you include in that scenario? (In the interviewers' experiences, this probe has been found to be most effective later in the interview, after the participants have gone through a CDM interview. We may, therefore, use this probe later in the interview process.)

IV. Ranking Self and Team Members (if time permits)

Interviewers will ask participants:

If you were to rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 (one being a complete novice at interacting with another culture to achieve a mission, and five being an expert as such interactions) where would you fall on the scale?

If the participant also supervised others who interacted with another culture to achieve success they will be asked:

Can you rank your team members on the same scale? How many team members did you supervise?

For each one, rank their level of expertise in cross-cultural competency 1-5.

After rankings are obtained, interviewers will then use multiple probes to understand how the participants discriminates lower levels of competency from higher levels. For example:

Describe the attributes that make a [Soldiers/Marines/Airmen] competent in cross-cultural settings. Which of these can develop over time with experience and coaching and which are characteristics that the person just brings to the job?
What are the most significant developmental advances that your team members have made during their most recent assignment?

Appendix B – Cross-Cultural Competence and Mission Effectiveness

Changing Tasks and Missions; Changing Mindsets – The examples demonstrate that many people have firm beliefs, based on their assignment, that they will not have to understand another culture while living in another country, but the need change without warning. While the first interviewee was deployed, he was assigned to do extensive purchasing of required supplies from local nationals to help stimulate the Iraqi economy, when he had expected to have little or not interaction. Additionally, his Soldiers ended up dispersed around the country in their Signal Platoon role as did the Soldiers in the second example. This demonstrates that while a mission may sound like it has no need for cultural competence, circumstances can be quite different than imagined.

> An Army Platoon Sergeant for Communications learned not to assume he could get along without cultural competence because he was assigned to handle communications inside the Forward Operating Base (FOB). (He was one of many in this situation. Those who never left the American enclave of the FOB were termed "Fobbits," like Hobbits.) The Sergeant's job changed so that he had to interact with the Iraqi people to do his job by purchasing as many of their supplies as possible locally. This job shift changed his mindset about what he needed to know and do. "Before my first two deployments, I was like 'I'm not going to be interacting with them; I really don't need to know anything.' It proved me wrong both deployments, but that was my mindset. Still even after the first deployment, that was my mindset for the second deployment: I would be on the FOB the whole time; I'm not going to need to know anything."
>
> During the deployment, his platoon was broken up into support groups of four or five people and dispersed around the area of operations. "Back to my other deployments I would have never seen me having to send any of my guys out there, they were always on a big FOB, protected and now all of a sudden, they have to go out in these little areas and set up. This last deployment we set up communications in a place, I swear just looked like it was out in a little area where you were right there, and people, their little houses or whatever, were just looking down into [where the guys were working]… I mean you could just throw a grenade right over in there. They were just out there in this little neighborhood. And people, you could see the back of their houses, if they wanted to come out back and just start shooting in there, they could have." [Competence was lacking to know who was around them and to relate to people to discern who was an enemy and who was not.]

[What changed your mindset and made you realize that you needed more cultural competence?] "To me, just for me, being in a supervisory position and now I'm responsible for the welfare of x amount of guys. Now I have to be able to expand myself. I was also a convoy commander, and I had a platoon of 60 soldiers, and they were spread out at different satellite locations because we had to maintain the wide area network. So I had to go to all those out sites and go visit my guys, soldiers, and if anything happened logistically, any kind of problems with the networks, sometimes I had to get in the vehicle and drive, and we'd have to put together a convoy team, with guns and trucks. That was my job to take care of the soldiers that way. And we had to make those trips, sometimes four, five, six times a month and so we would, sometimes, break down. But I was thinking, 'Oh my God, what if we got out there and didn't have enough to fix ourselves right there on the spot?' Or, nobody was on the way to come fix us? Well the people out there, they were just local nationals, so how could I walk up to their house…and say, 'Hey, do you have any gas?' 'Do you have any food?' 'Could I used your location as shelter to protect me and my guys until I get help?' And so that's, to me, like I said when I was placed in charge of soldiers, something other than myself, I had to know something in case I was put in that situation. So, again, it was mission driven, I didn't want to learn it just because I wanted to, it's because what could I do if I were put in that situation?" He did not believe everyone would respond with a new mindset to such a change, because they are not primed to do so by being sensitized to cultural awareness. He thought that because cultural and language information is often provided only in a cursory manner immediately before deployment, people do not have the mindset to accept the need for cultural competence even in the face of changing mission requirements.

Interview 2

Another Platoon Leader's Signal Platoon also expected to live on the FOB and take care of communications issues, but it was split up into small groups of four or five and distributed around the area of operations with small groups from the unit they were supporting. "At some of the posts that my soldiers were at, the guys [U.S. Soldiers] who were out there…were doing an outstanding job because they were working directly with the Iraqi police force and Iraqi army. The Iraqi Army and Iraqi police forces had their compounds right beside of us, and we were providing some connectivity for them also so that they could talk back to

the main base or whatever for reports and stuff that were being provided to us. There was a group of, I'd say, 25 American soldiers who were out there on the little post in the middle of town with them. The main reason [my Soldiers] were there was to provide communications for them. But these guys right here wound up interacting with the Iraqi Army/Iraqi Police force all the time because the Iraqi police force is the one who had the barricades up in town that had all the checkpoints. The Iraqi police force and the Iraqi army, and the Iraqi police and the Iraqi army were also the ones who were doing a lot of patrols. These guys were also on patrol with them. So any time there was an attack, an insurgent, or whatever identified they would work together. And they could have just sat in their shelter and sat in the building and not had any interaction at all but…I was glad they did." *Interview 3*

Language – Some people believe that there is really no way to be highly proficient in another culture without some language. They also believe the most proficient people had an extra edge because of language. Some described situations where language was critical in a crisis situation where the interviewee believed they were in potentially lethal danger. The use of language to avert the threat seemed to influence their view of how to operate in another culture successfully. Therefore, many people cannot separate having at least some language with cultural competence and the ability to be accepted by members of another culture.

"One of the worst experiences I had over there was because we didn't have an interpreter to call in an IED." Soliders going out on a "logistics path" and not a patrol decided they did not need an interpreter even though this interviewee objected. They came up on an IED. A civilian reported it and Iraqi police had blocked the way, and were trying to inform the Soldiers as to the nature of the problem and no one could understand anything. It was a very dangerous situation they were not prepared for. *Interview 4*

"We got lost one time, straight up. And we ended up in an alley where we actually had to fold the windows in, in order [for the truck] to go through because there was no way to [go] back either. And it was a perfect place to blow the heck out of you. [The Command Sergeant Major (who had been ranked an 8) got out and the next thing you know, you see a whole bunch of people. It's like, 'Hey, the Americans are here.' I have to admit, I was kind of like, 'This is it. Grab your shorts because you're getting it.' And then in his choppy conversation, he was able to get us out of there. [H]e was able to tell why we were there, what we were trying to do, and talk to the actual representative who was there saying that, 'Hey, we're not here to start shooting everybody, like you guys think. We're just going by.' [He explained] we just came from [the] checkpoint that's up there, and that checkpoint is actually keeping the bad guys away from you. And the [village representative] went like, 'you know what, we're having that problem too, how can we do [have a checkpoint]?' [Building rapport] out of that frickin' choppy conversation." *Interview 1*

Our Empathy Affects the View Others Have of Us Forever – The first example from early in the war in Iraq, while disturbing, demonstrates that when our forces don't know who is around them and lack empathy and experience to help them assess the threat level, terrible decisions can be made under stress that affect how we are viewed forever, with potentially far-reaching consequences. Likewise, empathy and the ability and willingness to engage can have important positive consequences.

> "That brings me back to another incident that happened in OIF 1 where we were sitting on the road. We had a flat tire, [and] we were fixing the tire. So the norm there was to get out of the vehicles and everybody got out and set up a perimeter while we fixed the tire; the whole convoy does this. And another convoy is coming off an overpass. They were coming down the exit, and there were some kids, in the median. We were standing there keeping them off, because the kids always wanted candy and stuff like that, and they would always run to the trucks, and that was…dangerous. So a little boy, he had to be about maybe 3 or 4 years old, he was in the median, and when the convoy came in, it was rolling so hard, and I don't even think the person who hit him knew they hit him, I mean they ran over him. And we were all like, 'He just hit this little boy!' …When it happened, there were some more kids; the rest of the kids started running back toward their village. And we really didn't know what to do, should we stay here? Should we leave? Because obviously he was already dead, but we…left because people started coming out of the village at that time, and we didn't know whether it was going to be a confrontation, and we didn't know if they were going to think it was us instead of this other convoy. So we ended up rolling out of the area. Which NOW, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't do that; I would call in a med-evac or try to get somebody there on the scene to help out or report it….What would the difference be when that father and mother came out there and seeing these vehicles drive off or seeing me coming out there trying to help? And I look back and I'm like, 'Wow! You know…' if I had went back and helped… if they were seeing the American was trying to do everything they could to help them. But, you know, if that was my son and then our country had been occupied by these people and they were just rolling off, that would stick with me the rest of my life. And I would have a feeling about these people the rest of my life…." *Interview 5*

"There was a vehicle that had wrecked on the side of the road. Most cases, convoys aren't going to stop because everybody was fine. They were standing outside the vehicle arguing. Their stuff was strewn all over the road. The convoy commander was going to go straight on through, the interpreter said, 'Oh wait a minute! Let's stop and talk, and find out what's going on.' They stopped and spoke to the people, and the soldiers helped them pick up their stuff and get it out of the road so it wouldn't get destroyed. They called back, they had a wrecker come out and get the vehicle righted because it was lying on its side. Those two people, a couple of weeks later, were setting beside the road and flagged the convoy down and told them don't go that way because there was an IED." *Interview 3*

"Something that had happened involved, I believe, the PSD2 (a Personal Security Detachment person) with the platoon leader. After a VB-IED incident…a girl... got pretty messed up. Against all rules, the platoon leader actually…put her in a helicopter out…and took her to Marmadeah where there was an infirmary, with the interpreter. She got treated and saved... And to make the story short, at the end, that was one of the factors, I wouldn't say THE factor, but it was one of the factors to actually gain the trust of the public in that village. He broke the rules, let's put it that way. But the outcome was good, let's say, but he broke the rules big time." *Interview 1*

Counterinsurgency Operations (COIN) are Dependent on Relationship Building – The Concerned Citizens Program put in place in the "triangle of death" in Iraq by the 2BCT, 10th Mountain Division was dependent on relationship building and perspective taking to stop insurgent infiltration. Squad Leaders are key players in COIN, and their level of cultural competence is what controls the actions of all the Soldiers on the ground. Even though the mission of the 2BCT was to find and terminate a list of known insurgents, they were dependent on relationships with the villagers of the area to control the area. Collaborative efforts had to be instituted to get insurgents out of the villages and set up checkpoint manned by U.S. Army Soldiers and village men together to keep insurgents out. Members of the 2BCT "lived forward" as they called it; living among the people they wanted to influence in the toughest areas.

> "The Brigade Commander actually was the one who got the leadership [to use relationship building as a basis for the operation]. He sat [them] down in an office and said, 'Look, you can have as many bullets as you want, we're not going to win [unless] we go and actually get them involved' and it paid off." [Concerned citizens turned in insurgents on the list and created cooperative checkpoints.]
>
> The Soldiers rated with the highest cultural competence in this interview lived among the villagers and maintained constant contact. [This individual] "was a 9, and [this individual], he's a 10. And a lot of my squad [were 9 or 10]. I was like 'Wow!' Why? Because these guys were out there, sleeping, like that's a mud hut, or a house, and they were sleeping right there." *Interview 1*